

September 6, 1996

RP International 23241 Ventura Bldv, Ste. 117 Woodland Hills, CA 91364 00727

To Whom It May Concern:

I work for the Metrolina Association for the Blind, a United Way Agency, as the Director of Personal Adjustment and Rehabilitation for the Blind. Part of my job includes running a free library of Description Videos. I have seen the demand for such a service grow by leaps and bounds in the last 3 years. Everything I hear back from clients suggests that having movies described to them increases their enjoyment and understanding of the plot and the movie in general. Grandparents have described their pleasure at watching the children's movies with their grandchildren and younger people have described their happiness in watching a movie without having to ask others what is happening during the movie.

The concept of TheatreVision which expands this idea into the movie theatre and elsewhere opens up the world of entertainment outside the home and I am sure it will be readily embraced by all who learn about it.

Way to Go!!!

Sincerely.

Mrs. Laura Park-Leach, M.Ed.

aura Parh-leach

Director of PAR



National Association for Visually Handicapped

----serving the partially seeing

22 West 21st Street · New York, New York 10010 · Telephone (212) 889-3141

Mrs. Lorraine H. Marchi FOUNDER/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

September 17, 1996

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

As the Founder and Executive Director of National Association for Visually Handicapped—the only voluntary national health agency serving the "Hard of Seeing" exclusively, not the totally blind—I am writing in support of RP International's innovative TheaterVision program.

The fact that TheatreVision was conceived and developed by Helen Harris, a woman who is, herself, blind from retinitis pigmentosa, lets me know it is a program which has fully addressed the particular needs of the visually disabled. Indeed, for the past year, we have been advocates in support of Dr. Margaret R. Pfanstiehl's efforts to promote discriptive video services through the organization she founded, The Metropolitan Washington Ear, Inc. Dr. Pfanstiehl, too, is visually challenged. We have full confidence in both these professionals and fully anticipate great strides in behalf of those we serve—the partially seeing—who comprise the second largest group of the disabled in the country.

I believe it is vital that all who are visually impaired be afforded the same opportunities to participate in mainstream popular culutre as their sighted counterparts. Those who do not have the benefit of full vision are an overlooked and undeserved population generally, and certainly, in terms of providing them avenues for the enjoyment of meaningful entertainment.

TheaterVision removes a barrier that has, until now, prevented the visually handicapped from having full access to the enjoyment of motion pictures, television and live performance. I am happy to see efforts at having the barrier lifted and offer my support and encouragement to all who work toward the furtherance of this very important program.

Sincerely,

Lorraine H. Marchi

Founder/Executive Director

LHM:ec Encs



26 November 1996

RP International P.O. Box 900 Woodland Hills, Ca. 91365

Dear Director:

As a professional dealing with the visually challenged, I am writing in support of RP International's innovative TheatreVision program.

The fact that TheatreVision was conceived and developed by Helen Harris, a woman who is, herself, blind from retinitis pigmentosa, lets me know it is a program which has fully addressed the particular needs of the visually disabled.

I believe it is vital that the blind and visually impaired be afforded the same opportunities to participate in mainstream popular culture as their sighted counterparts. More often than not, the blind are an overlooked and under-served population in terms of providing avenues for the enjoyment of meaningful entertainment.

TheatreVision removes a barrier that has, until now, prevented the blind from having full access to the enjoyment of motion pictures, television and live performance. I am happy to see that barier being lifted, and offer my support and encouragement in the furtherance of this very important program.

Very truly yours,

Bruce E. Massis

Vice President/General Manager

Guiding Light for the Blind A Pennsylvania Charity

Nevil Building 919 Walnut Street Philadelphia, PA 19107 (215) 627-0600 FAX (215) 922-0692

United Way Donor Choice # 5682

October 17, 1996

David S. Boyer, M.D. TheatreVision RP International P. O. Box 900 Woodland Hills, CA 91365

Dear Dr. Boyer,

Thank you for writing to us about TheatreVision. I receive such movies from the New Jersey Library for the Blind and Physically handicapped. I thought you might be interested in knowing how the idea was developed.

I noted that my daughter Gail Swed, who is sighted, was the only member of my family who could fill in the spaces on a TV movie without interfering with the presentation. During a lunch with Frank Casner, who was running The Radio Information Center for the Blind in Philadelphia, I told him that I thought it would be a good idea to prepare audio tapes from recorded TV movies with descriptions for use on this radio station for the blind.

We were worried about copyrights, etc., but decided that we would not get into any trouble since we were an SCA station. Reception was great; Frank recorded the voice from his TV set and did voiceovers to produce the final product.

I was very enthusiastic about the system. This was back in 1977 or so, and I sent a copy of "The Graduate" to Dr. Margaret Rockwell in Washington, D.C. She apparently liked the idea. She promoted it for movies and the theatre. I have not heard from her, nor have I heard any mention about where the idea came from.

I manage a small charitable organization which encourages the use of electronic travel aids by people who are blind. I believe the best is the Laser Cane which uses a thin pulsing crystal-generated light as the sensing medium.

Providing electronic mobility devices for individuals who are blind or visually impaired Enhancing mobility, employment, education and the quality of life for all ages.

North Carolina Department of Human Resources Division of Services for the Blind

Covernor Morehead School

301 Ashe Avenue • Raleigh, N.C. 27606

lames B. Hunt Tr., Governor C. Robin Britt, Sr. Secretary

John B. DeLuca Director Sheila S. Breitweiser, Ed.D. Superintendent Tel. 919: 733-6381

September 19, 1996

Retinitis Pigmetosa International P.O. Box 900 Woodland Hills, CA 91365

Dear Reader,

I recently became aware of your organization. I am a social worker at the Governor Morehead Preschool in North Carolina. We work with children across the state, 0-5 years old, who have visual impairments. I think the materials you have might be of use to some of the families we serve.

Could you kindly send me more information about your organization. I greatly appreciate your assistance.

Sincerely,

Jane Barabash Family Services

Governor Morehead Preschool

Send to:

Governor Morehead Preschool Attn: Jane Barabash 301 Ashe Avenue Raleigh, NC 27606



Atlantic Provinces Special Education Authority Commission de l'enseignement spécial des provinces de l'Atlantique

5940 South Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 1S6 (902) 424-8500 Voice/TYY (902) 424-7765 Administration Fax (902) 424-0543 Assessment Fax (902) 424-6421

October 21, 1996

The Director RP International Box 900 Woodland Hills, CA 91365

Dear Director:

As a professional dealing with the visually challenged, I am writing in support of RP International's innovative TheatreVision program.

The fact that TheatreVision was conceived and developed by Helen Harris, a woman who is, herself, blind from retinitis pigmentosa, lets me know it is a program which has fully addressed the particular needs of the visually disabled.

I believe it is vital that the blind and visually impaired be afforded the same opportunities to participate in mainstream popular culture as their sighted counterparts. More often than not, the blind are an overlooked and under-served population in terms of providing avenues for the enjoyment of meaningful entertainment.

TheatreVision removes a barrier that has, until now, prevented the blind from having full access to the enjoyment of motion pictures, television and live performance. I am happy to see that barrier being lifted, and offer my support and encouragement in the furtherance of this very important program.

Very truly yours,

P. Ann MacCuspie, Ph.D.

Acting Director

Programs for Persons Who Are Visually Impaired

J. An Haluza

September 9, 1996

RP International P.O. Box 900 Woodland Hills, CA 91365

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing in response for the support of RP International's TheatreVision program. For four years I have been working at a Talking Book Library. It is a free service for blind and physically handicapped individuals. We get many calls from our patrons that this service is a "life saver". Can you imagine having such a great improvement to other entertainment because of this TheatreVision program? It would mean so much and make such a difference for these visually challenged people.

I am in close contact with deaf people who use closed captioning and I know how frustrating it is for them when a form of entertainment does not have this wonderful service. I believe it would be such a godsend for TheatreVision to be expanded everywhere. Why should TheatreVision be different from closed captioning? These are two terrific services ever brought to life.

We who are hearing and have our sight can enjoy almost any sort of entertainment. Think of those who are less fortunate. These individuals are more often overlooked and not considered. Now is an opportunity for them to be included.

I encourage the RP International's TheatreVision program to be offered to those who need and would appreciate the service. Thank you for allowing me to voice my support.

Sincerely

Teresa Rodriguez

Equipment Control Officer

NM State Library

Talking Book Library

325 Don Gaspar

Santa Fe, NM 87501-2777



HELEN KELLER SERVICES FOR THE BLIND

Frank Romano
DIRECTOR

September 6, 1996

To Whom It May Concern:

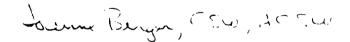
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The fact that TheatreVision was conceived and developed by Helen Harris, a woman who is, herself blind from retinitis pigmentosa, lets me know it is a program which has fully addressed the particular needs of the visually disabled.

I believe it is vital that the blind and visually impaired be afforded the same opportunities to participate in mainstream popular culture as their sighted counterparts. More often than not, the blind are an overlooked and under-served population in terms of providing avenues for the enjoyment of meaningful entertainment.

TheatreVision removes the barrier that has, until now, prevented the blind from having full access to the enjoyment of motion pictures, television and live performance. I am happy to see that barrier being lifted, and offer my support and encouragement in the furtherance of this very important program.

Very truly yours,







From Darkness into Light

September 4, 1996

To Whom It May Concern:

As an agency dealing with the visually challenged, we are writing in support of RP International's innovative TheatreVision program. We are also strong supporters of the Descriptive Video Service started by WGBH Public Television in Boston, and use the DVS movies in our office.

We believe it is vital that the blind and visually impaired be afforded the same opportunities to participate in mainstream popular culture as their sighted counterparts. Those who are visually impaired are often overlooked and under-served in terms of providing avenues for the enjoyment of meaningful entertainment.

TheatreVision, and DVS, has added new enjoyment of motion pictures, television and live performance for those who have faced barriers because of their vision problems. We are happy to support and encourage the furtherance of these very important programs.

Sincerely,

Arthur R. Kelts,

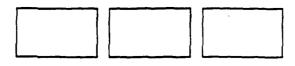
Executive Director

Nontyon-pleasesen witing Information on how to access the Theatre Vision

process at our movie

174 Central Street • Lowell, Massachusetts 01852

Member Agency: United Way of Merrimack Valley Tel: (508)454-5704 Fax: (508)458-556



National Braille Press Inc.

Dear Director.

As a professional dealing with blind people, I am writing in support of RP International's innovative TheatreVision program. From my personal experience I find descriptive audio a valuable service.

I believe it is vital that the blind and visually impaired be afforded the same opportunities to participate in mainstream popular culture as their sighted counterparts. More often than not, the blind are an overlooked and under-served population in terms of providing avenues for the enjoyment of meaningful entertainment.

TheatreVision removes a barrier that has, until now, prevented the blind from having full access to the enjoyment of motion pictures, television and live performance. I am happy to see that barrier being lifted, and offer my support and encouragement in the furtherance of this very important program.

Sincerely,

William M. Raeder Executive Director

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Attachment 4:

1995 Congressional Record Submitted by: Helen Harris President and Founder RP International

Helen Harris
President and Founder
RP International & TheatreVision™
Post Office Box 900
Woodland Hills, CA 91365

CS Docket No 97-141

1995 Congressional Record

RP INTERNATIONAL 1-800-FIGHT RP

Submitted by: Helen Harris, President and Founder

Ten million people have eyesight so impaired they cannot read ordinary print. The impact of this on America is incredible. Our organization, Retinitis Pigmentosa International, was established 22 years ago to find a cure or treatment for the most devastating of eye diseases, specifically retinitis pigmentosa. Now, 22 years later, RP International embraces the potential cure for all eye diseases through retinal cell transplantation.

It is the hope of RP International, backed up by the research breakthroughs, that the potential for cell transplantation, retina transplantation and finally, eye transplantation is within the realm of possibility in high-tech research going on now in our country. Children, young adults and seniors can possibly look forward to a lifetime of light . . . instead of a lifetime of darkness. The impact on the economy, family life, and individual benefits of such a development is inestimable.

There are medical research breakthroughs that have been ignored in the field of eye research, as were some eye diseases ignored in the past. Specifically, retinitis pigmentosa was considered "rare," "incurable," and thus, no research that had any value was done until the retinal cell transplant appeared on the horizon. Now, this very research cannot get proper funding to bring it to success. There are more than seven major eye institutes in the United States whose extraordinarily talented researchers tell us the retinal cell transplant procedure has the most possibility of restoring eyesight now, but that they and their institutes cannot get the funding they need. They look to RP International for help, and RP International looks to the National Eye Institute for further funding, now. The eyesight saved is the sight of America's most precious commodity: its children.

RP International has established a record of being a leader in searching out and finding new and innovative avenues of research programs. RPI also leads the field in seeking out new techniques and low vision aids, computer assistance, and social activities that will bring the visually impaired back into the mainstream of daily life.

One such innovative program created by Helen Harris, currently the president of RP International, is called "TheatreVision." TheatreVision is the first successful undertaking which will allow a current motion picture film to be <u>narrated</u> and <u>shown</u> in a motion picture theater with the use of headsets. "Forrest Gump," described and narrated by Vin Scully, using a special new technique created by Helen Harris, stands alone now as the first motion picture to be accessible to the blind in a motion picture theater. The potential to bring blind and visually impaired people back into the theaters is not only possible, it <u>could happen today</u> with the proper funding.

TheatreVision looks to the United States Congress to assist in making motion picture theaters accessible for this technique with the installation of low-cost equipment in each theater that permits the use of the headphones to hear the narration. We also request help in the establishment of a grant fund for the continuation of the narration and description of movies for the blind in theaters across the country.

We have also applied this technique to a "live" Broadway stage presentation, thus making this important art form available to the blind as well. Setting a new record in making communication to the blind, TheatreVision has successfully narrated and described the 1995 Academy Awards show on public radio via satellite, thus carrying the broadcast to more than 150 stations in the United States. This is a first -- and the description was done by Helen Harris, acting as host and describer to the radio audience while the description was communicated to her by expert sighted assistants in the field. This successful communication for the blind has been proudly hailed as a vast improvement to the quality of life for children, young adults, adults, and seniors within and without the boundaries of the United States. This can also be accomplished in every language! But, we need your help.

Additionally, RP International has established the first ever "Right to Sight for Life" proclamation, which establishes the basic rights of the blind and visually impaired. They read as follows:

- 1. Right to be treated with dignity, respect, love and care, even if born with a vision loss.
- 2. Right to have my vision protected against unnecessary hazards to further sight loss in my environment.
- 3. Right to be taught how to learn as other children are. I have the right to write my name, to learn to speak, to read words, and to have those words translated into a language that I can learn, either large print, audio cassette or Braille.
- 4. Right to attend public schools with children who may or may not be blind or have a visual impairment.
- 5. Right to have audio signals and extra light in dangerous areas I may travel in.
- 6. Right to try any sport I believe I can perform without injury to my person or others.
- 7. Right to have all ballots and voting materials printed in large print, on audio cassette, or in Braille.

- 8. Right to have all materials that are translated in other languages translated into my language as well, which is large print, audio, or Braille.
- 9. Right to have currency which is written in a medium that I can read and make others understand, such as Braille or specially marked bills.
- 10. Right to have others educated to learn to accept and adjust to my impairment so that I have a fair chance to live life as they do.
- 11. Right to walk with another in a sighted guide technique and to be understood.
- 12. Right to have my mail, such as utility and other bills printed in a form that is readable by me.
- 13. Right to sight . . . for life.

 Per the ADA, other rights include accessibility of verbal description of movies, plays and television that allow a better quality of life for all blind and visually impaired.

The following states (listed in order of receipt) have supported our TheatreVision project with special proclamations honoring "TheatreVision Day" on February 21, 1995, commemorating the premiere of TheatreVision with the Paramount motion picture "Forrest Gump"... this year's big Academy Award winner.

Indiana Texas Massachusetts Idaho Minnesota Illinois North Carolina Alaska South Dakota Georgia California Oklahoma Michigan Florida West Virginia Iowa Vermont Arkansas Utah Rhode Island South Carolina Wisconsin Delaware Washington Alabama Maine North Dakota New Mexico Montana Missouri

Mississippi
Connecticut
Nebraska
Ohio
Arizona
Louisiana
Maryland
New Hampshire
Pennsylvania
Tennessee
Kentucky
Hawaii
Wyoming

Kansas

The TheatreVision project looks forward to a Ten City Tour with a premiere at the White House during this year. TheatreVision requests the support of all members of both parties of Congress to acknowledge the need for better verbal communication for the blind, be it television, motion pictures, or other art and educational forms for America's children.

Attachment 5:

Proclamations from the Governors

Helen Harris
President and Founder
RP International & TheatreVision™
Post Office Box 900
Woodland Hills, CA 91365

CS Docket No 97-141

STATE OF INDIANA EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT INDIANAPOLIS



EXECUTIVE CHAMBER ALBANY 12224

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts



A Proclamation

By His Excellency

GOVERNOR WILLIAM F. WELD

White ut North Carolina



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT





Executive Office







John Engler

Executive Declaration Governor John Engler seuse this Executive Declaration in Observance of

February 21, 1995

.. THEATREVISION DAY

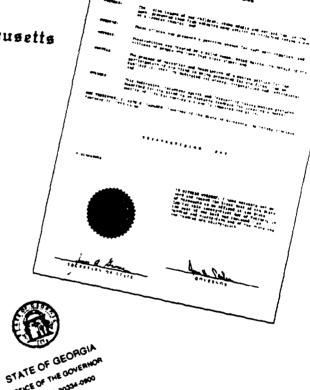


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Proclamation







State of South Catolina
Proclamation

GOVERNOR DAVID M. BEASLEY

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The Office of the Governor Proclamation

OFFICIAL MEMORANDUM STATE OF TEXAS OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Executive Proclamation State of South Bakota Office Of The Governor







COVERNOR

STATE OF FLORIDA

Office of the Governor

THE CAPITOL TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-0001

STATE OF ALASKA

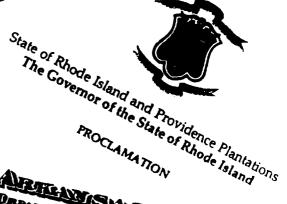


Executive Proclamation Tony Knowles, Governor

Proclamation Gaston Caperton Governor of the State of West Virginia



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR State of California



STATE OF VIEW TANGETTS

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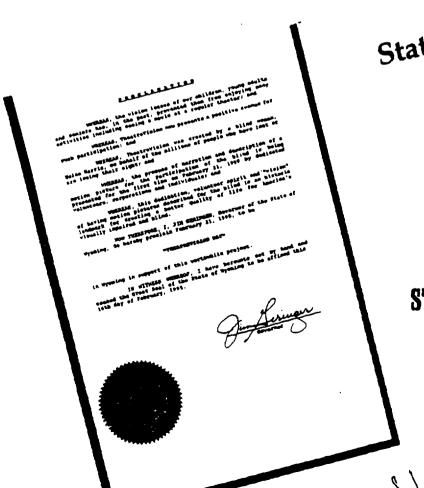
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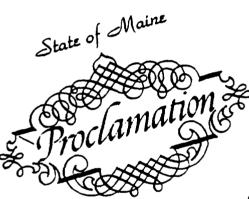
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State Of Ohio







Office of the Governor

office of the Governor
State of Missouri
Proclamation





State of



Connecticut

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

Office of the Governor



A PROCLAMATION
BY GOVERNOR
KIRK FORDICE

By His Excellency JOHN G. ROWLAND, Governor: an

Attachment 6:

TheatreVision~ Projects

Helen Harris
President and Founder
RP International & TheatreVision™
Post Office Box 900
Woodland Hills, CA 91365

CS Docket No 97-141

TheatreVisionwo

The loss of eyesight brings with it a life of living in darkness, a darkness that lasts forever, 24 hours a day. Society still has not found a way to pierce the darkness completely, but family support and social activities can sometimes make the difference in the survival of a child or an adult or a senior living without the light.

Now, visually impaired people can begin to look forward to attending a motion picture or live performance *in a theater*, just like everyone else! The process of TheatreVision is simple. Through a headset worn in the theater, a descriptive narration brings the contents of a motion picture, live performance of television show to the eyes of visually challenged and blind people, many of whom are children.

TheatreVision's first project, Paramount Picture's "Forrest Gump," has been described and narrated for the blind by Vin Scully, the beloved voice of the Los Angeles Dodgers, and one of RPI's VIP supporters.

TheatreVision now presents its first "live" show, "Beauty and the Beast," the ultimate children's show, beautifully narrated and described by Army Archerd.

Your attendance at this, our first live TheatreVision presentation of "Beauty and the Beast," is important. Just as important is your financial support for the possibility of bringing TheatreVision to every city in the country! To this end, we are enclosing a donation envelope requesting your support for the TheatreVision Ten City Tour Project for Children. We hope you will find a way to support this project with your best gift.

Founding TheatreVision Committee

Wendy Finerman	Gerald Molen	Gary Sinese
Mary Ann Grasso	Bill Neighbors	Oliver Stone
Sherry Lansing	Vin Scully	Steve Tisch
Barry London	Joel Sill	Tim Warner
Penny Marshall	Joel Silver	Robert Zemeckis

Dedicated to Army Archerd . . .

I'm Waiting

Today a little child called me on the phone. She told me that her eye was blind, and that she was alone. One can see, and one cannot, she told me with a tear. What can I do, where can I go, and Helen, who will hear?

My doctor said my eyes are bad and that I'm going blind, and stared at me without a smile, and told me to go find a lady named Helen who lives in Los Angeles, a lady who has answered other kids like me . . . so here I am

I don't go out very much, although I wish I could.
I feel so funny being blind, and so I sit and brood.
I think about all my friends racing down the street, skirts a-whirling, smiles a-twirling, dancing quick of feet.

They run so fast and laugh so loud, they never do fall down. Not like me, no -- not at all -- when I do that I'm a clown. The steps are hard, the falls are sore, my eyes fill up with tears. I hide my face so they won't see that I'm the child in tears.

So, Helen, lady from Los Angeles . . . tell me how to fix these eyes of mine, the ones so blind, please open up the sun.

I want to run and fall right down of my very own accord, and not the way I do it now because I cannot see the steps, the dog, the hallway door . . .it really doesn't matter.

With dying eyes I cannot see, each day a little less. Helen, lady from L.A., do you have a pill to make me see the bright green tree that's growing on the hill?

I'm waiting . . .

Helen Harris

Theatre Vision[™]

Post Office Box 900 Woodland Hills, California 91365-0900 (818) 992-0500 *Fax (818) 992-3265



TheatreVisionwe

Created by

Helen Harris

presents

The First "Live" Description for the Blind of Disney's

"Beauty and the Beast"



Narrated and Described
By
ARMY ARCHERD

March 22, 1995 - 8:00 p.m. The Shubert Theatre Los Angeles



AUDIO DESCRIPTION FOR THE BLIND

VISUALLY CHALLENGED

TELEVISION

1995 -- "The Eyes of Christmas" Special KCOP Channel 13, United Paramount Network Featuring Paramount's "Heaven Can Wait" Described by David Doyle & Helen Harris

1996 – Featuring Warner's "Charlots of Fire" Described by Vin Scully & Helen Harris

1995 & 1996 – Cable Television Featuring Republic's "Christmas Eve" Described by Peter Mark Richman & Helen Harris

December 14, 1996 & January 23, 1997
The Olsney Channel's "American Teacher
Awards" Described by Casey Kasem, combining
the revolutionary use of two technologies by
TheatreVision: Television and Radio working
together for the first time in the history of
broadcasting for the visually challenged.

March 27, 1995 The Academy Awards Described by Helen Harris March 25, 1996 The Academy Awards
Described by Helen Harris

December 21, 1996 – NBC's
"It's a Wonderful Life"
Described by Mario Machado & Helen Harris

August 4, 1996 Olympic Ceremonies and Events

Described by Helen Harris & Jennifer Mickshi from Gymnastics Olympica, Van Nuys

January 23, 1997 – NBC's "Schindler's List" Described by Mario Machado & Helen Harris Assisted by survivors Leopold Page & Elane Norych Geller

STAGE

1995 - Wait Disney's "Beauty and the Beast" The Shubert Theater Described by Army Archerd

The Eyes of Christmas

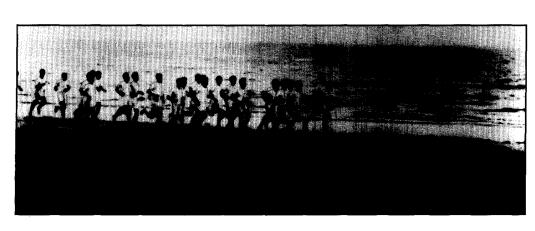
for December 1997

available

Join the Eyes of Christmas Television Special

An Extraordinary Entertainment Event

Presenting
The
Academy
Award
Winning
Motion
Picture



"Chariots
of
Fire"
Described
for the
blind
and vision
impaired

available

for

December

1997

The Eyes of Christmas Hosts



Ed McMahon



Vin Scully



Army Archerd

The Eyes o

all new production avail